**Summary**

This workshop will present the assessment and evaluation challenges in social studies and explore how to design sound assessment and evaluation. It will explore forms of assessment used at Palestinian schools and their characteristics. It will also apply the formative assessment tools to the context of teaching and learning in Palestinian schools and explain how to integrate them in teachers’ preparation programs.

**The aims of the workshop include:**

* To understand the assessment and evaluation challenges for social studies
* To plan sound assessment and evaluation in social studies
* To explain what specific forms of assessment and evaluation used in Palestinian schools?
* To explore the characteristics of forms of assessment used at Palestinian schools
* To explore the formative assessment tools
* To apply the formative assessment tools to the context of teaching and learning in Palestinian schools and to integrate them in teachers preparation programs.

**ACTIVITY 1: Assessment and Evaluation Challenges for Social Studies**

Social studies present some unique challenges for assessment and evaluation, write down some assessment and evaluation challenges you faces in teaching social studies:

**HANDOUT 1: Assessment and Evaluation Challenges for Social Studies**

Social studies present some unique challenges for assessment and evaluation these challenges include:

* Social Studies includes many ways of thinking and knowing
* Within a single social studies discipline, the kinds of learning to be assessed cover a wide range.
* Many key social studies outcomes are hard to define compared to outcomes of other subjects.
* Some of the social studies goals may not be evident until after students have left school.

**HANDOUT 2: How Do I Plan Sound Assessment and Evaluation**

Teacher will keep the following questions in mind when planning for assessment

**HANDOUT 3**

Response: Additional Ways We Can Teach Social Studies More Effectively -- Part Two

By [Larry Ferlazzo](http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo) on April 25, 2012 8:57 PM

*Great social studies teachers emphasize ideas, causes, effects, and actions across all of society, affecting all people, and not just the "facts" included in a textbook or the "winning" side of a story. Effective social studies teachers engage today's students when we make discussing, questioning, writing, problem solving and creating on a critical level the daily norm. When we understand that each of our classrooms is itself a unique society and a place where real life not only needs to be read about and discussed, but is also happening every day, then we will become more effective. Most importantly, we will be preparing our students to enter a rapidly changing, extremely diverse, intrinsically connected society that needs more people who are prepared to listen, empathize, write, discuss, and problem solve -- not obsess on the past.*

<http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2012/04/even_more_ways_we_can_teach_social_studies_more_effectively_--_part_two.html>

**ACTIVITY 2: Group Work**

**One teacher from each group present**

* What are specific forms of assessment and evaluation used in Palestinian schools?
* What are the main characteristics of forms of assessment in Palestinian schools?

**ACTIVITY 3: Extended or Essay Response Test**

**On the following scale where 10 means extremely high and 1 means extremely low, decide how do Palestinian teachers use extended or essay-response test?**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **To what extent do Palestinian Teachers:** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| Use various forms of essay responses such as writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper about a current issue. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Put clear and precise scoring criteria, applied consistently by teachers. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use essay for collaborative learning (or assessment) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Modify an essay question to meet the diverse needs of students. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Personalize responses through role play to offer a more authentic context for writing. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Direct students to respond in structured ways using action verbs connected to Blooms taxonomy (i.e., describe, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate). |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Handout 4: Formative Assessment in the Classroom: Process and Affective Domains**

* Although usually more time consuming, there are several more intensive types of formative assessment.
* In history and social studies classes, questions that require students to explain how or why, target their higher-order thinking skills.
* Ideal for when students are working on research projects, either individually or as part of a group.
* In a political science class, a teacher might ask students to list the pros and cons of ,,,,,,,,,
* The focus is on decisions, judgments, dilemmas, or issues that are central to the unit being taught.
* Very often asking higher-order questions requires teachers to follow-up with questions that ask students to elaborate on their answers. Here are some possible follow-up statements or questions.
* I am interested in your thinking. Please tell me more.
* Please help me to understand. Suppose you are the teacher and I am the student
* I don’t think this issue is easy to understand. Sometimes I get confused, don’t you?

**Handout 5: Formative Assessment Tools**

**The classroom opinion poll**

* Focus on students’ attitudes and values.
* A pre- or post-assessment device “to determine whether and how students’ opinions have changed in response to class discussions and assignments.” Angelo and Cross, *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, 168-171.

Example: In a history class before discussing the debates surrounding the use of the atomic bomb, a teacher could ask students whether or not the United States should have used the bombs to end the war. This question is ideal to use both before and after discussing the use of the bombs.

* Used widely in discussion forums

**Journals**

* Useful for asking students to reflect on their beliefs, values, and Attitudes.
* Many teachers require their students to keep their lecture and reading notes in a journal.
* When used informally, students may actually provide more honest remarks since they know that their attitudes are not being graded.

Example: The double-entry journal, students write their reactions to their lessons in a separate column. On the left side of the page, students should take their lecture or reading notes, while on the right side, next to the appropriate issue, they should write their comments. Such responses help teachers to evaluate their students’ reading, analytical, and reflective abilities. Ibid., 263-270.

**Portfolios or collections of students’ work**

* Summative portfolio, the emphasis is generally onhaving students save examples of their best work.
* Instead of emphasizing students’ best work, a formative portfolio includes examples of students’ work that emphasize their development over a period of time.

Example: instead of simply saving only final drafts of written work, students could be asked to save early as well as final drafts. Any rubrics used to assess written work should be included as well. The qualitative comments from the papers and rubrics would provide the chief indicators to students about their problem areas as well as ways they have improved.

Some of the student work samples that lend themselves particularly well to formative portfolio collections include:

* essays, research papers, written projects, and other written exercises;
* cooperative learning group outcomes;
* skill demonstrations (e.g., using reference materials);
* authentic creations (e.g., oral history projects, exhibits, videos, audiotapes, artifacts, photographs, bulletin boards, posters, Web sites);
* rating forms, checklists, and observation forms;

Peter H. Martorella, *Teaching Social Studies in Middle and Secondary Schools*, Second Edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996), 403.

**ACTIVITY 4: Document-Based Questions**

Alberta and most other provinces have identified procedural understanding as a key goal for social studies education. In other words, students are supposed to be able to use the concepts and procedures of the disciplines involved in social studies such as history and geography.

In teaching history in primary grades, curricula recommend the use of primary sources: pictures, artifacts, maps, and written and oral accounts.

**Do Palestinian teachers use these for assessment? Why**

**Handout 6: Document-Based Questions as Performance Assessment**

* The questions are not designed to test student’s recall of information but rather their abilities to critically use sources as the basis for constructing historical accounts.
* The assessor collects data on the process or makes a judgment about the quality of the final product as students actually do something.
* Opportunities to combine instruction with assessment.

According to Bower, Lobdell, and Swenson, culminating performance activities or projects:

* are central to the unit and its big question
* are known to students in advance
* require students to think deeply about important issues
* ask students to create a meaningful product or performance
* demand students use different learning styles and intelligences
* make clear to students the standards by which their work will be judged
* foster the habit of self-assessment
* allow teachers to act as coaches

Example: Three prominent international conflicts are drawn from newspapers. Students select one of the three, write a summary of the conflict, and discuss the influence of climate, resources, and location on the conflict. As well, the students sketch from memory a map of the region of the world showing national boundaries, capitals, and salient landforms. A legend and compass rose are included.

Bert Bower, Jim Lobdell, and Lee Swenson, History Alive! Engaging All Learners in the Diverse Classroom, 2nd ed. (Palo Alto, CA: Teachers’ Curriculum Institute, 1999).

**Handout 7 Authentic Assessment**

* Authentic assessments are a particular form of performance assessment where students are required to perform a real-life activity and an assessment is made based on that activity.
* The activity does not necessarily have to relate to contemporary situations.

Example: Students in a civic education class studying their community, for example, might be asked to do an assessment of the area around their school (sidewalks, parks, public places) for wheelchair accessibility and prepare a report for a relevant civic body such as a committee of city council.

**Activity 4: Structured Observation**

Much of the evidence of student progress (formative assessment) will be gathered through watching them work. Therefore, we need to be able to be more specific about what we mean and that kind of specificity can be obtained by structured observation: Explain what teachers might watch for:

**Perseverance:**

**Decreased impulsiveness:**

**Flexible thinking:**

**Metacognition:**

**Careful review:**

**Handout 7: Structured Observation**

* Many performance and authentic assessments will include “hard” evidence of student progress such as written components, constructed models, and visual representations, but often much of the evidence of student progress will be gathered through watching them work.
* Many social studies outcomes are related to that important and hard-to-define term “thinking.” However thinking is defined, conventional tests reveal only so much.
* We need to be able to be more specific about what we mean and that kind of specificity can be obtained by structured observation: watching for, and collecting evidence on, particular behaviors. In the area of thinking, for example, we might watch for:
* Perseverance: Do students give up or back up and use a different strategy if the first ones do not work?
* Decreased impulsiveness: Do students blurt out answers and make many corrections in their written responses or do they pause before answering, make sure they understand the learning task, and consider the responses of others in building arguments?
* Flexible thinking: Do students use the same approaches for different problems or do they use and weigh the merits of alternative strategies, consider the approaches of others, and deal with more than one classification system simultaneously?
* Metacognition: Are students unaware of how they learn or do they describe and reflect on the processes they used in learning?
* Careful review: Do students hand in uncorrected or unedited work as soon as it is done or do they take time to review and edit?

Structured:

* The teacher looks for evidence for precise criteria
* Some form of record is kept of the observations such as checklists or anecdotal notes.

**Do teachers’ preparation programs at Palestine Universities emphasize performance and formative assessment? Explain by examples**